

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 05327 011742Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4638

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 5327

EXDIS

TEHRAN FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, EAIR, PFOR, NL

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER
AND SECRETARY IN ROME.

REF: (A) THEHAGUE 5294
(B) THE HAGUE 5288

1. DIRGEN OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS RUTTEN HAS JUST TELE-
PHONED EMBASSY TO INQUIRE INFORMALLY WHETHER IT WOULD BE
POSSIBLE FOR FONMIN VAN DER STOEL TO MEET WITH SECRETARY
IN ROME NOVEMBER 5 OR 6 TO DISCUSS NETHERLANDS-US
RELATIONS IN FIELD OF AIR TRANSPORT. NOTING THAT THIS
MATTER PRESENTS A PARTICULARLY SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEM
IN NETHERLANDS, RUTTEN IS CONCERNED THAT WASHINGTON MAY
NOT BE SUFFICIENTLY AWARE OF THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION.
THUS HE WAS ANXIOUS TO KNOW WHETHER, SHOULD VAN DER STOEL
ASK FOR AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE SECRETARY, IT WOULD BE
POSSIBLE FOR A MEETING TO BE ARRANGED. VAN DER STOEL
WOULD MAKE A SPECIAL TRIP TO ROME FOR THIS PURPOSE.
RUTTEN SAID GON WOULD BE STANDINB BY THIS WEEKEND FOR
A RESPONSE. IF AFFIRMATIVE, FONOFF WOULD THEN MAKE
FORMAL REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT.

2. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, OUR RECENTLY RECESSED
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PAGE 02 THE HA 05327 011742Z

CIVIL AIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GON HAVE ENGENDERED

DEEP AND WIDESPREAD CONCERN HERE, AS MOST RECENTLY EVIDENCED BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION'S REPORT TO PARLIAMENT THAT OUTCOME OF NEGOTIATIONS COULD HAVE DAMAGING EFFECT ON US-DUTCH RELATIONS (REF A) AND VAN DER STOEL'S EXPRESSION OF CONCERN TO THE AMBASSADOR (REF B).

3. WITH THAT SAID, WE BELIEVE THAT MEETING NEXT WEEK SOLICITED BY VAN DER STOEL WOULD BE PREMATURE FROM US POINT OF VIEW (AND PROBABLY ALSO FROM DUTCH). IF ON THE ONE HAND US HAS IN MIND EVENTUALLY BACKING OFF FROM ITS STIFF STARTING DEMANDS IN FIRST ROUND OF CIVIL AIR NEGOTIATIONS IN THE HAGUE, WE SEE NO REASON WHY SECRETARY SHOULD GIVE GAME AWAY TO VAN DER STOEL NEXT WEEK, A GOOD TWO MONTHS BEFORE GON IS LIKELY TO MAKE ITS CRUCIAL DECISION ON SELECTION OF A LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER REPLACEMENT. BY MAKING SUCH AN IMPORTANT CONCESSION ON CIVIL AIR RELATIONS, WE WOULD BE GIVING UP LEVERAGE THAT MIGHT PROVE QUITE USEFUL AT A LATER DATE IN INFLUENCING A DUTCH DECISION IN FAVOR OF AN AMERICAN AIRCRAFT. IF, ON THE OTHERHAND, THE US INTENTION IS TO CONTINUE TO APPLY STRONG PRESSURE ON THE DUTCH TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL CONCESSIONS IN THE CIVIL AVIATION FIELD, IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE, IN OUR JUDGMENT, TO SIGNAL THIS TO VAN DER STOEL NEXT WEEK AND THUS PROVIDE GRATUITOUS AMMUNITION TO THOSE IN THE GON AND PARLIAMENT WHO ARE LOOKING FOR A POLITICAL PRETEXT NOT RPT NOT TO BUY AN AMERICAN PLANE. WE CONCLUDE, THEREFORE, THAT THE MOST PRAGMATIC REPLY TO THE DUTCH PROBE WOULD BE ONE OF REGRET THAT THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE DOES NOT PERMIT A MEETING IN ROME BUT THAT THE SECRETARY IS LOOKING FORWARD TO DISCUSSING THIS AND OTHER IMPORTANT SUBJECTS WITH VAN DER STOEL AT AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY.

4. PLEASE REPLY NIACT IMMEDIATE.
GOULD

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